k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MI4
Muntafiq

Good-looking Shepherd Girls

tussle with them in the old war days when I held charge of the Suq al Shuyukh and Nasriyah areas. All are good fighters and of tough breed, and all carry the very latest type of rifle or carbine with an abundance of ammunition.

The shepherd tribes leave the Euphrates about the 15th October of each year, and provided early rains (*wasm*) have fallen in the southern desert, move slowly south grazing on the new green shoots and drinking from rain pools or *khabras* which, owing to the rock formation of the subsoil almost everywhere in North-East Arabia, sometimes lie for weeks before drying up.

During February and March the shepherd tribes cover the whole of the area lying to the south and west of Kuwait, and quite one of the pleasantest features of Kuwait life at this time of the year is to meet the large number of pretty shepherd lasses who are to be seen laughing happily and wending their way along the roads which converge on to the town.

These girls are usually accompanied by droves of small donkeys laden to the ground with curdled milk in skins, wool and firewood which they bring into Kuwait to sell, or again in the evening taking home their daily purchases of food, brightly coloured cloth, etc.

They are a very happy community and as a rule prefer to travel without their men folk, who stay with the tents or tend the flocks.

These *Hukra* lasses, as they are locally called, all go unveiled in contrast to the Kuwait Badawin women. Being for the most part pretty and good looking, they usually have a crowd of town youths buzzing round the spot where they congregate to sell their wares. Like most of their sisters nearer home, they can drive the shrewdest of bargains, and give as good as they get in verbal exchanges.

The women with babies either carry them on their backs on the march, or tuck them into a saddle-bag thrown across a donkey's back. The wee faces peering out just above the edge of the roomy bag are a most comical sight.

In general appearance these shepherd girls, like their men folk, are strong and lusty, and rarely ride their donkeys. They walk twelve to fifteen miles a day when visiting Kuwait, and on the same day in the evening return some six or seven miles out of the town, sleep on the side of the road when dark falls, and at dawn continue their